

Parish Council briefing paper – Parish Christmas Tree celebration

Background

Discussions around moving the Parish Council Christmas tree celebration location have gone on for years.

When Tesco was built at Millbrook Square, the Council agreed that it would move the location of the celebrations and established a new tree (donated by John Twaites) at the junction Main Street and Vale Avenue; this location has been used since at least 18 years. Permission was granted from OCC (it's on their land). Electrical connection was made and the tree was surrounded by a low-level fence boundary.

Further discussions on moving the location of the celebrations have centred around locating the celebrations in the new local centre on the Grove Airfield Development when it is built in the near future.

Consideration

At Full Council on 16 June 2026, the Clerk was given direction by Council to produce a report into the feasibility of moving the location of the Christmas celebrations to the Village Green.

Due to other priorities, the Clerk has obtained so far only one quote (from Oxfordshire County Council for £3,500 (excl VAT) for the supply and installation of an electrical connection point (power supply) for the new tree.

Cost associated with fencing have not yet been obtained, nor the cost of a new tree (if required).

Implications of moving the location

There are no additional implications for remaining in the current location.

The Village Green, as members will know is not owned by the Parish Council, it is owned by the Haywards Plot and Village Green Chairity (Charity No 300091), of which the Parish Council is sole trustee.

The Village Green sits within a Conservation Area so planning Permission would have to be sought for the installation of the electrical connection point and possibly the tree and any permanent fencing.

The Village Green hosts the annual Grove Feast, a travelling fair which has been attending Grove and the surrounding villages for over a hundred years. By placing permanent tree or even a temporary fitting will reduce the space the fair has to operate.

There is no parking on or near the Village Green, for the musicians and crowd. The road noise and dangers from traffic movement are the same in either location.

There is currently no budget, (at least £5,000) would be required.

Recommendation

Whilst the idea of moving the Christmas celebrations to the Village Green should be considered and explored, because of the implications identified above, I would recommend that they remain in its current location until such time as an area in the new local centre is identified.

G M Mundy

Parish Clerk

3 September 2026